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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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A-ONE #0116

06/18/99

~ People Are Talking! ~ Videlity Now Freeware! ~ Ultimate 8-Ball!
~ Whip! VLM Modules! ~ Virus Alert Still On! ~ New MyMail Out!
~ ST News Coding Con 2K! ~ Classic Gaming Expo'99 ~ NBA Jam 2000
~ Atari CoMa 5.0.0 Out! ~ Lara Croft Does SCI-FI ~ Compaq's New PC Line

-* Judge May Allow Caldera Case *-
-* Lynx Ponx At JagFest '99 Saturday *-
-* FCC Opposes Local Cable Internet Rules *-

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->From the Editor's Keyboard
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"Saying it like it is!"

Yes, this recent weather is more like the New England stuff I really enjoy: warm (not hot) days and cool nights! I hope it stays this way for the next couple of weeks, with perhaps a little rain to feed my lawn and gardens, because I'm on vacation until the 4th of July! Finally, some well-earned time off from the stresses of the "real" job.

The hammock is set up and has my name on it for mindless relaxation or to help me enjoy a good book outdoors. The pool is almost ready for a nice cool refreshing interlude. Some golfing is definitely on the schedule. The barbecue is ready for overtime. It's going to be a fun couple of weeks with no urgent major projects needing to be done (as long as my wife doesn't think up some!).

So, before I get too comfortable, let's get to the rest of this week's issue. After all, that's what we're all here for, right?!

Until next time...

CoMa 5.0.0 Supports MicroLink Office

From: Siegfried Hartmann <Hartmann@ThePentagon.com>

Programme-Name: CoMa for Atari Voice/Pro 5.0.0 (COMMUNICATION-MANAGER)
 Purpose: Fax & voice-mail-system, to send & receive fax,
 answering machine, mailbox & terminal with internal z-modem
 Requirement: Computer with MagiC[Mac|PC] or TOS
 Download: from Softbaer-Mailbox: +4930/62709-572 (ISDN X.75 & V.34)
 or homepage: <<http://i.am/Softbaer>>
 CoMa_Atari_5.0.0.zip (550 KBytes)

CoMa has the following common functions and attributes in all levels

- English documentation
- Support for the Elsa MicroLink Office & USR 56k (Pro)Message(Plus) modem self-mode(read fax and voice & configuration)
- Fax-class 2 & 2.0
- Polling (send poll-request-tone only with class 2.0 and some class 2-modems)
- Network-capable fax-job-management (3 jobs in 24 hours)
- Serial fax
- Display of the calling-number with ISDN-modems
- Display of call units with ISDN-Modems
- Internal editor
- Incoming pages are displayed during fax-reception !!
- Text can be mixed with graphic-logos and signatures
- Fax-voice-data-number management, including groups

- Management for incoming fax/messages/mails
- Administration of 8 telephone companies
- Zone- & and time-dependent selection of telephone-company
- Mailbox with internal send & receive-z-modem
- Terminal mit internal z-modem

CoMa Voice (additional)

- Answering machine for ZyXEL, Elsa/TKR, USR, Dr. Neuhaus, Lasat and much modems with Rockwell-Chipset
- Day & time programmable answering messages
- Multiple outgoing messages for several ISDN-MSN
- Time dependent redirection of incoming calls
- Remote control / recall of new received faxes
- Recall of 7 special messages by DTMF-code
- Real time decoding of sound for Mac/Atari-Sound system of ZxXEL ADPCM3/ADPCM4, Smarty/Cybermod u-Law- & Rockwell ADPCM4-Sounds
- Wave-Sound conversion in ZyXEL- & Cybermod- & Rockwell-format

CoMa Professional Version (additional)

- Fax- and voice-on-demand-system
- Any amount of messages via DTMF tone recall is possible
- Each category can contain up to 100 messages and/or 100 fax-pages.
- Statistic of category recalls
- Voice-messages can be put together from multiple voice-files.
- For the mailbox you can assign personal passwords and download-folders to as many users as you want
- Personal message for each caller, who has an entry in the numbers-list (with ZyXEL Elite & MicroLink ISDN, if caller MSN is displayed)
- Unlimited fax-jobs
- Fax transmission via polling request (DTMF-PIN not needed - only for Class 2.0 modems)
- Permanent poll-sender possible (caller gets fax pages even without sending a poll-request)
- Time-dependent messages for 10 MSNs for ISDN
- Connect-kind can differ for each MSN

New in CoMa 5.0.0

- Support for Elsa MicroLink Office Self-Mode
 - Readout faxes and messages
 - Configuration
- Self-Mode works with USR Message Plus Modem
- Self-Mode-box opens with Shift-F3
- USR Self-Mode: if no receive-time has been stored, the time when this file was transferred to CoMa calls-list is shown
- USR Self-Mode: Function for record and play of outgoing- and full memory-messages via CoMa
- Voice-On-Demand and Fax-On-Demand window is opened with Shift-F2
- If line is busy on "Dial Voice", re-dialing is active now
- To choose a folder with several voice-files the button "folder" has to be active in Preferences/MSNs & Messages.
- Pause with space-bar if a message is played back via computer-loudspeaker
- The 8 kinds of entries in the calls-list can be marked with a colour
- Used telephone company for fax transmission is written into the logbook
- Edit field for exchange line (needed if you use a private branch) is now in preferences/general
- Shift-functions-key works also with right shift-key
- Various bug fixes

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<<http://i.am/Softbaer>> or <<http://ww.ThePentagon.com/Softbaer>>
Mailbox: 030/62709-572 ISDN X.75 (64000 bps) & V.34 (28800 bps)
Voice: 030/62709-466 Fax: -459 Voice & Fax-On-Demand-Test-System: -573

New Whip! Effects Modules Released

From: Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>

A variety of new effects modules for the Whip! Virtual Light Machine
(<http://escape.atari.org>) have been released:

Tunnel effect: http://wombat.ludvika.se/ae/dhs_files/misc/whiptull.zip
2D-bumpmapper: http://wombat.ludvika.se/ae/dhs_files/misc/whipbul0.zip
RGB-splitter: http://wombat.ludvika.se/ae/dhs_files/misc/whipspl0.zip
Realtime julia fractal: http://wombat.ludvika.se/ae/dhs_files/misc/juliavlm.zip

Nailspin -- rotating 3-D object: <http://dhs.atari.org/>

Kevin Savetz <savetz@northcoast.com>
Moderator of news:comp.sys.atari.announce

MyMail Updated

The STiNG mail client MyMail has been updated to version 0.84.
Lots of smaller bug fixes this time.

<http://www2.tripnet.se/~erikhall/programs/mymail.html>

[This news item courtesy of <http://www.atari.org>]

Pre-beta of INFITRA E-mail Client

Merciful has released a new pre-beta (0.18) of their promising
emailer INFITRA. Go to their homepage to get more info and to download.

<http://home.wxs.nl/~merciful/infitra/index.htm>

[This news item courtesy of <http://www.atari.org>]

FALCON > Videlity Now Freeware

Videlity, a screen enhancement tool for Falcons, by Dave Murphy,
has been released as freeware. You can grab the latest version,
1.03 from his website:

<http://www.users.zetnet.co.uk/dmurphy/>

[This news item courtesy of <http://www.atari.org>]

ST News International Christmas Coding Convention 2000 - Atari ST

From: Richard Karsmakers <karies@wxs.nl>

Are you a member of the former Atari 'scene'? Did you, perchance, visit the "ST News International Christmas Coding Convention", in Oss, Netherlands, December 1990?

Then you should not wait a second longer and surf over to <http://stniccc.atari.org> to discover that, in fact, a reunion of that very historical event is being organised for December 2000, a 10th anniversary reunion as it were! It is going to be the coolest event of the millenium, I can assure you!

Updated Atari BBS List

Greg Goodwin has updated his list of Atari 8-bit and ST BBSs. It lists 39 bulletin boards in the U.S. and other countries, 18 of them "with a definite pulse."

<http://www.holyoak.com/atari>

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, it looks like I'm getting at least part of my wish for a gradual springtime before we get into the dog days of summer. The weather here in the northeast has been warm and dry. Just the kind of days that make you want to stay up late to watch the stars or just to enjoy the cool night air and appreciate some of the things that you might normally take for granted.

But while I'm enjoying the warm temperatures and lack of rain, farmers in the area are 'sweating' it out. Crops need rain all through the growing season, but especially now when they're in their 'formative' stages. It might not seem like a major problem right now, but come August or so, we could be hard-up for all kinds of local produce. I'm a dyed-in-the-wool native corn fanatic, and the thought of going without fresh corn makes me shiver. Heck, when I had a front tooth crowned, what I missed most was being able to eat fresh corn on the cob. When the need arose to have the crown replaced with a dental implant, the thing I was most happy with wasn't the way it looked more like a natural tooth or that it was much more resistant to disease and degenerative problems,

but that it allowed me to eat honest-to-goodness corn on the cob without having to worry about the darned crown falling out. It was quite an expensive procedure to be sure, but the fact that I can now eat one of my favorite foods without worrying almost makes it worth it.

And now they tell me that this year's local corn crop might suffer because of the lack of rain... don't it just figure? That's the way my luck normally goes.

I guess it's just another illustration of the fact that every situation has two sides. I hope that doesn't mean that I should feel bad if I find myself enjoying fresh corn on a sunny and dry afternoon sometime. <smile>

Well, let's take a look at what situations people on the UseNet are finding themselves in.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
=====

Dennis Bishop asks a Jaguar related question:

"Does anyone have the Jag cheat file? or know of someone who has it on a web page?"

Dr. Clu of Atari Users of North Texas (AUNT) tells Dennis:

"Try....
<http://www.atarihq.com/jaglynx/jag/jagcheat.txt>
Hope that helps!"

This must be the week for people who use pen names. Phantommm asks:

"Does anyone happen to know if HD Driver removes the limit on the size of the Boot partition and other partitions when using FalconSpeed?

I really need to know if it does or not."

The answer comes straight from the author of HD Driver, Dr. Uwe Seimet:

"FalconSpeed has its own hard disk code which is independent from TOS compatible hard disk drivers. This means that those limits can't be removed."

Mike Grove tells Phantommm:

"There is a version of Falcon Speed software greater than what you or I have. It will remove the restrictions of the version we are using. I have tried to get an update, but no one seems to have it, or take the time to send it. I had the version once, but didn't keep it when I sold my first card. I got the upgrade from Robert, at COMPO in the U.S., at that time."

Tony Cianfaglione asks for help with compressed files:

"Is there a program to convert LZH files to regular ZIP so STZIP can handle them. I can't get DCSEA to unpack the archive no matter what I try so I've given up on it but I can't find any other programs to handle LZH files. Is LZH that rare that no other programs exist for it?

I need HSMODA07.LZH in regular ZIP format."

Joe Villarreal tells Tony:

"LHARC 3.** will handle any LZH file. It's available on FTP sites on the internet as well as places like Delphi and Genie.

A shell program is also available that will convert LZH to ZIP, but you'll need the LZH and ZIP unpackers to use the program. LHARC 3.** would be your best bet; a gem shell program is also available."

Tony comes back and asks a question on a different subject:

"Is it possible?

I managed to get STinG and CAB 1.5 on 2 - 720k disks and set up an auto folder so XBoot gets mostly everything working. However, it reports that STinG has not loaded its modules.

Having successfully run STinG on a Falcon, I believe I have the correct information in the STinG.INF file (using A:\ instead of C:\) and it points to the correct directory. The STX file are all there waiting but STinG can't see them for some reason.

Until I get them to load, the dialer reports 'Serial driver not found'. Also scc.prg bombs with 2 bombs on the Mega2 and CAB bombs with 3 bombs. I'm using a mono monitor.

This is the sequence:

I turn on the Mega2 (no HD) with the STinG 720k disk in the drive. The device driver shows, XBoot starts and loads the prg files from the Auto folder:

```
drvin.prg
mfp.prg
scc.prg (this reports 2 bombs)
sting.prg
```

the 4 cpx's load:

```
serial.cpx
sting.cpx
stngport.cpx
stngprot.cpx
```

STing starts up with the installation report line across but reports No Modules Loaded.

The STinG.INF file is in the AUTO folder along with STinG.prg. The INF file reads: A:\ (and nothing else) as I put all the STX files in the root directory. (Is this incorrect?)

Clicking dialer reports 'serial driver not found', the familiar warning I received while setting up the Falcon but that problem was solved once the STX files were loaded. Why don't the files load?

Inserting the CAB 720k disk for testing purposes, I click on CAB.app (1.5 version), the header pops up but the program bombs with 3 bombs prior to the completion of loading. The program is all there except for the

readme files.

My ISP would like to offer Atari ST PPP support for the 1040, Mega2 & 4 as well as TT and Falcon etc. If I can get the Mega2 up and running, my next project is a 1040 STf with no HD. Any ideas?"

Nicholas Bales tells Tony:

"You don't need scc.prg on a Mega2. MFP.PRG should be enough.

Are you sure this is the order in which the programs are loading ? If so, it looks correct (except for the scc.prg).

What message does sting.prg display?

It [the root directory for the stx files] should be ok. The resolve.stx should be the last to load too.

It looks like STING hasn't loaded, or it couldn't find the .stx files.

Remove the scc.prg, and check what message STING.PRG returns."

James Davies asks about Falcon memory:

"I'm just about to acquire a 4Mb Falcon (I've got an STFM already), but I want it to have 14Mb.

1 - How much does the memory cost these days? For PC's/Mac's it equates to about £1 a Mb, is this the case with Falcon memory, or will it cost me more because it's scarcer?

2 - I live in the UK. Anybody know where I can get said memory?"

Chris Crosskey tells James:

"Core Designs (used to be Titan Designs) in Birmingham do it IIRC it's about 70 UKP, basically it's an adapter that fits in your memory cards place and takes a 72-pin SIMM..."

T.H. Huxley posts:

"I've got one of these Megafile hard drives hooked up to my 1040ST and I've been having intermittent problems getting it to boot up... usually I have to try it a few times and it will finally run through the initial startup and then work, but lately the disc spins and the boot software never kicks in... any ideas?"

Terry Ross tells T.H.:

"I had the same problem with two different megafiles, both at about the same time. In my case, it turned out that the power supply was failing. That might not be your problem, it's something that you could look into.

[random thought] - I don't even know why I'm responding to this, I've tried to reply to five different posts, and none of them have gone through, although the log file said they were accepted... (um, basically, I'm trying to get a good new text to quoted text ratio here, to see if maybe that works <grin>)"

Roger Cain adds:

"Try re-installing the driver. This will re-write the boot-block on the HD and refresh the driver file."

Ronald Andersson takes a shot at Terry's posting problem:

"Your post did come through ok here anyway. In fact, your problem may simply be a misunderstanding. Possibly your news handler (whatever it is) considers it unnecessary to present your own posts for your reading, as you have already seen these when sending them. It could just be a matter of configuring the program to show them to you."

Terry tells Ronald:

"Actually, I do see my original posts, although generally it takes about five to seven hours for them to show up. My ISP doesn't run it's own news server, but uses RemarQ. RemarkQ disconnects after about 2 minutes of no activity though, and generally, I have to send the post again. I've also found that I can't cancel any of my posts once they've been sent <shrug> - I suppose I should just go to doing everything offline."

J rgen Nyberg asks about TOS error codes:

"I was wondering if anyone knows what "Error TOS -34" means. I get it from my CDrom after i changed order in the Auto folder but i didn't do any changes to Spin or Metados at least not any that i am aware of."

Terry Ross tells J rgen:

"I believe -34 is 'Path not found'."

Ronald Hall chimes in and adds:

" Methinks Terry is correct. Just in case:

TOS error messages	

message no.	meaning of message
-----	-----
1	general error
2	disk drive not ready
3	unknown command
4	CRC error- disk checksum wrong
5	bad request
6	seek error- track not found
7	unknown media- bootsector wrong
8	sector not found
9	out of paper
10	write fault
11	read fault
12	general error
13	disk write protected
14	media change detected
15	unknown device
16	bad sector (verify)
17	insert other disk (request)
18	insert disk
19	device not responding

32	invalid function number
33	file not found
34	path not found
35	too many open files
36	access denied
37	invalid handle
39	out of memory
40	invalid memory block address
46	invalid drive specification
48	cross device rename (not the same drive)
49	no more files
58	record is locked - (file locking and network)
59	no such lock (unlock an unlocked record)
64	GEMDOS range error- seek wrong?
65	GEMDOS internal error
66	invalid executable file format
67	memory block growth failure
80	too many symbolic links
200	mount point crossed (indicator)

BOMBS and what they mean

no. of bombs	explanation
1	not applicable
2	bus error (user does something the ST doesn't permit)
3	address error (usually error in program)
4	illegal instruction (two prgs using same memory space)
5	division with zero
6	CHK instructional error
7	TRAPV instructional error (usually ROM error)
8	conflict with a privileged command
9	trace vector error
10	line 1010 instruction- line 'a' error
11	line 1111 instruction- line 'f' error
12	not applicable, reserved
13	FPU protocol violation (TT/Falcon)
14	format error
15	uninitialized interrupt vector
16-23	not applicable, reserved
24	vector 24 error (might be MC68901 and/or GLUE chip)
25-31	auto-vector interrupts
32-47	TRAP exception Vectors
48-55	MC68881 FPU exception vectors
56-63	MC68851 MMU exception vectors
64-79	MC68901 MFP vectors
80-95	MC68901 MFP vectors (TT only)
96-111	Zilog 86C30 SCC vectors (MegaSTE/TT/Falcon only)
112-255	undefined

** A large number of bombs might be the total of several errors.

Part of this information has been taken from the book "The Atari A-Z" (1995, Linnhe computing) with kind permission from the author; Mark S. Baines (msbaines@cix.compulink.co.uk).

Compiled by Hallvard Tangeraas (hall@post1.com) 24-June-1996

I believe in giving credit where credit is due, so I left the credits at the end...

Hope this helps..."

James Smith asks for help with posting on the UseNet:

'One of the NewsGroups I subscribe to (binaries.mods) regularly has items posted in a number of parts. No problem; I simply drag each file onto MUNPACK.TTP and it re-assembles the complete file.

How can I split my posts in a similar fashion so my PC friends can put them back together automatically (I cannot see anything in the Newsie docs that covers this)?"

The author of NEWSie, John Rojewski, tells James:

"Most Newsgroups no longer limit the sizes of individual posts as they used to do, so you do not need to post multiple parts. NEWSie does not provide the ability to split a post into multiple parts, because this feature would become useless as newsgroups allowed larger posts."

Well folks, that's it for this installment. The next time it rains, try to remember those farmers, huh?

Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Classic Gaming Expo '99  
    " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "  
                                Ultimate 8-Ball! NBA Jam 2000  
                                Lara Croft Does SCI-FI!  
                                Ponx! Release This Weekend!  
                                And much more!
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->From the Editor's Controller - Playin' it like it is!
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Y'know, it's truly disheartening to see a small group of true gaming enthusiasts, mostly "experts" in classic gaming, sniping at each other like a bunch of immature and egocentric school kids! It's one thing to get upset

For immediate release
Contact John Hardie, Sean Kelly & Keita Iida
info@cgexpo.com
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LEGENDARY HARDWARE PIONEERS TO PARTICIPATE
IN HISTORIC ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION

June 10, 1999

VALLEY STREAM, NY -- The founding fathers of some of the most popular videogame machines and computers will get together for an unprecedented panel discussion during this year's Classic Gaming Expo '99(tm) (CGE). They are expected to share their experiences in how their systems came to be and shed some light on the trials and tribulations in designing game hardware. The panel will consist of such legends as Ralph Baer (creator of the Magnavox Odyssey), Jay Smith (GCE Vectrex), Jerry Lawson (Fairchild Channel F), Jay Fenton (Bally Astrocade), RJ Mical (Commodore Amiga, Atari Lynx & 3DO) and Joe Decuir (Atari 2600, 400/800 computers & Commodore Amiga).

"It is an absolute honor to be in such great company," said Jerry Lawson, former Chief Hardware Engineer at Fairchild and creator of Channel F, the first ever programmable and cartridge-based game console. "I look forward to telling my story behind the Channel F, but I'll also be there as a fan, just like everyone else in the conference hall."

The panel discussion is scheduled to take place on Saturday, August 14, at the Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Van Burnham, author of the forthcoming book "Supercade: Context and Aesthetics of the Videogame Age 1971-1984" (The MIT Press) and Senior Production Manager of Wired Magazine, will moderate the round table.

"We are delighted that the leaders for just about every major U.S. game machine will be represented in the panel discussion. I would be hard pressed to think of any other time in history when such an all-star cast of gaming's greatest hardware pioneers have come together in one location," stated Sean Kelly, Co-Promoter of Classic Gaming Expo.

Conceived and coordinated by three of the individuals responsible for coordinating last year's highly successful "World of Atari" event, Classic Gaming Expo(tm) is the industry's only annual event that is dedicated to celebrating the roots of electronic entertainment, bringing together industry pioneers, gaming enthusiasts and the media for the ultimate in learning, game-playing and networking. Classic Gaming Expo(tm) is a production of CGE Services, Corp. (www.cgexpo.com)

END

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Classic Gaming Expo '99
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Hasbro Interactive Creates Sports Division

Leading entertainment software publisher Hasbro Interactive today announced the formation of Hasbro Sports. The new business unit will enable Hasbro Interactive, already the number-one publisher of family games, to compete in the \$1.8 billion interactive sports gaming market. Hasbro Interactive is widely credited with helping to build the casual gaming market and now plans to take its mass-market approach to the interactive sports business with games that appeal to a broad range of levels and interests.

Hasbro Interactive will develop sports games across all categories of the interactive business, including action, children's, family, strategy and simulation. "We believe there's an enormous opportunity to make sports products that are fun and accessible for the average game player," explained Hasbro Interactive President Tom Dusenberry. "With our familiar brands, hot licenses and all-family approach, Hasbro Interactive is uniquely positioned to broaden the market for sports games. We believe we can redefine this genre of games, just as we've done with the interactive games market."

According to Dusenberry, Hasbro Sports will pursue totally new concepts, development partners and other relationships to build its line of interactive sports games and toys.

Among Hasbro Sports' planned first interactive titles are: a Trivial Pursuit NASCAR CD-ROM edition, Hasbro Sports Digital Camera and CD-ROM, and NFL(TM) Football and NASCAR editions of Hasbro Interactive's new Em@il Games(TM). All titles are expected to be in stores this summer and fall. Several more titles are in development for 2000 and beyond.

Jim Buchanan, General Manager of the company's Microprose and Atari units, will head Hasbro Sports. Buchanan's sports experience includes executive positions with Hyde Athletic and Saucony Footwear, among others. "We're applying a mass-market model to the sports business, from product development right through to our marketing effort," commented Buchanan. "This is a growth category and we have the resources and innovative approach to lead it."

Hasbro Interactive's parent, Hasbro, Inc., has an established base of sports brands, such as Winner's Circle vehicles and Starting Lineup action figures. Through a partnership with Action Performance Companies, Inc., a leader in motorsports merchandise, Hasbro has agreements with top NASCAR drivers, including Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt Sr., Dale Jarrett, Rusty Wallace, Bobby Labonte and many more. In addition, Hasbro maintains long-standing relationships with several of the major sports leagues and players' associations.

Earlier this year, Hasbro Interactive announced its own licensing deal with NASCAR.

Midway Shifts Into High Gear as World Driver: Championship for Nintendo 64 Races to Store Shelves

Midway Home Entertainment Inc., one of the industry's leading video game publishers, today announced that it is shipping World Driver: Championship

for Nintendo 64. This breathtaking, ultra-detailed racing game developed by Boss Studios, the creators of gaming titles such as Top Gear Rally and Twisted Edge Extreme Snowboarding, is being launched with a comprehensive national marketing and advertising blitz.

"Midway is very excited to bring this high-speed realistic racer, with stunning graphics to both hardcore racing fans and novice drivers alike," said Paula Cook, vice president of marketing for Midway Home Entertainment. "We are supporting World Driver: Championship with an extensive marketing campaign which includes TV commercials, internet and broad scale print advertising, retail circulars, special in-store signage and promotions including a pack-on T-shirt, sunglasses or a car shade with the purchase of the game."

Midway is also sponsoring a "Be the World Driver" sweepstakes, running from June 15 - August 15, where contestants can win Midway games, T-shirts or a grand prize of \$2,500 cash. Details for entering the contest can be found in Nintendo Power magazine, on packages of World Driver: Championship and on Midway's Web site at <http://www.midway.com>.

To help promote World Driver: Championship, Midway has teamed up with BFGoodrich Tires, a world-class tire brand, which is promoting its new tire with color in the tread, the Scorcher(tm) T/A. Press events in Los Angeles and Detroit, as well as 18 enthusiast events throughout the country, will include interactive kiosks displaying World Driver: Championship for consumers to play.

World Driver: Championship has received rave previews from the gaming and consumer press. Not only has it graced the cover of Nintendo Power's July issue, but according to Electronic Gaming Monthly, "There's no question, the table is set for World Driver: Championship to become the N64's new darling." IGN.com stated, "This game is going to Rock!" And, Imagine Games Network awarded World Driver: Championship "Best Nintendo 64 racing game."

World Driver: Championship features over 30 exotic cars to choose from and 10 dazzling tracks from around the world. Players can enter the game as an independent racer and begin their "career paths" as several racing teams scout them. Throughout the game, players have the option to test-drive for teams before making career decisions and switching racing teams along the way. Players enter several racing circuits in an attempt to win trophies and expand their racing career.

Racers can play in a high-resolution letterbox or standard screen format and race in reverse or in mirrored mode to create hundreds of different racing experiences. World Driver: Championship also features a split screen two-player option, "save your replay" mode, as well as "time attack" mode which allows gamers to race against recorded replays of semi-transparent ghost cars.

THQ Racks Up the Release of 'Ultimate 8 Ball'

Game Publisher THQ Inc. announced the release of "Ultimate 8 Ball" for the PlayStation game console.

Delivering unparalleled realism and unmatched gameplay for everyone from the novice to the experienced pool hustler, "Ultimate 8 Ball" features 14

different types of games as well as 15 unique tables. The game will be available nationwide at major retail outlets for a suggested retail price of \$39.99.

'More than 42 million Americans play billiards each year, ranking the game second in frequent participants behind basketball," said Michael Rubinelli, vice president of product development, THQ. 'With 'Ultimate 8 Ball,' there's never a wait for a table -- just the best gameplay and the toughest competition ever available for the PlayStation game console."

The competition is always fierce in ''Ultimate 8 Ball" where pocket games range from two kinds of ''eight ball" to the ever popular ''speed pool." Other games include 9 Ball, 10, 6 and 3 Ball, Straight Pool, Rotation, Killer and Cut Throat. Wielding the Dual Shock controller as the ''cue," players can compete against their friends, hustle their way up the pool pro ladder against computer-generated opponents, or attend the ''School of Pool" to brush up on the fundamentals of this classic game.

UK-based developer Mirage Technologies implemented a true-to-life physics engine to recreate actual ball movement and collisions found on real tables. This advanced engine allows players to create spin, english, jump and masse their ball in any direction. Additionally, the trick shot mode, multiple table designs and wide variety of opponent styles make for incredible replay. Just chalk up your stick and start banking the cue ball.

Acclaim Sports Announces NBA JAM 2000 for Nintendo 64

Acclaim Sports announced that NBA JAM 2000 is in development at Acclaim Studios Salt Lake City and is scheduled to ship this Fall. The latest edition of the popular basketball videogame franchise will feature all-new 2-on-2 ''JAM" mode, in addition to a realistic 5-on-5 NBA simulation.

'NBA JAM is one of the most successful sports video game franchises of all time," said Michael Jerchow, Acclaim Sports senior marketing manager. 'We have taken NBA JAM 2000 back to its roots by including the intense 2-on-2 action that has made NBA JAM so popular, while also providing a hard core season simulation. Gamers will be getting two games in one."

NBA JAM 2000's all-new JAM mode features special ''double-sized" characters and incredible effects such as sparks during player collisions, smoking ''hot" players, and flame engulfed basketballs. In addition to the special characters, gamers may choose to JAM with over 300 NBA players.

In simulation mode, NBA JAM 2000 features realistic player models with real-life faces, smooth skin Hi-Rez(TM) textures, player-specific details, and special effects galore. User selectable speed settings let gamers choose their own pace. A detailed team management system based on current NBA player contracts lets gamers take the role of a team's general manager - bidding on free agents, drafting rookies, inviting players to training camp and making cuts. Other features in NBA JAM 2000 include:

- * All 29 NBA teams, authentic arena floors and over 300 NBA superstars
- * Jaw-dropping Ultra Hi-Rez(TM) graphics with Acclaim Studio's award-winning sports engine
- * All new 2-on-2 JAM mode featuring 50 new dunks and awesome special effects like sparks during collisions, fire balls and smoke on ''hot" players

- * Exclusive 2-on-2 JAM courts, including street, beach, and school-yard courts
 - * Authentic 5-on-5 simulation mode with actual team play styles like the Jazz pick and roll, Celtics press and Bulls triangle offense
 - * New and improved player models feature real-life faces, smooth skin high resolution textures and true life size
 - * Over 800 new motion-captured moves by former NBA star Xavier ``X-Man" McDaniel, including post-ups, pushoffs, defensive grabbing and defender-stopping picks
- Play by play from nationally known NBA announcer Kevin Harlan
 - Unique signature moves and free throw routines like Allen Iverson's cross-over dribble and Scottie Pippen's finger roll
 - Players display their real life skills and attributes such as Gary Payton steals, John Stockton pick and roll passes, and Shaquille O'Neal backing in defenders
 - Improved 3-D Create a Player, 3-D Create a JAM player, Create a Team, and customize your own team's play style
 - Total Team Management includes: realistic player trading, drafting, signing and releasing; managing the cap and trade deadlines
 - Improved Instant Replay with ultra smooth animations, auto replay, and multiple camera angles
 - The most advanced NBA play calling system ever designed by NBA scouts
 - Scouting reports allow the user to make the best coaching decisions
 - On screen play plaques allow you to call plays on the fly
 - Track season-long player and team stats in over 200 categories.
 - Play the 1999-2000 NBA team schedules and view out of town scores
 - Arena announcing by Utah Jazz' Dan Roberts with pre-game player intros
 - In-game cinematic victory and action sequences
 - In-game player highlights feature color photos and stat updates
 - Player injuries affect game and season performance
 - 5 sim modes: shoot out, exhibition, season, custom season and playoff
 - Bonus modes include 2-Ball, 3-Point Contest, Free Throw and Practice
 - The most cheat codes of any NBA JAM title to date

Lara Croft Goes SCI FI

Eidos Interactive's ever-popular video game heroine and cyber-superstar Lara Croft will appear in the SCI FI Channel's bold new celebrity-driven on-air campaign entitled I AM SCI FI. Designed to obliterate the traditional definitions of who and what represent science fiction, the campaign features the unflappable Croft in a 20 second mini sci-fi episode debuting June 18.

The only virtual character selected for the campaign, the adventure-loving pin-up girl of digital entertainment takes her place alongside other celebrities chosen for their cutting-edge personalities: actress/singer Traci Lords, the band Everclear, tennis stars Venus and Serena Williams and rap artist Busta Rhymes.

The heroine of the best-selling PlayStation and computer game series Tomb Raider, Croft was the first female character to star in her own action game series. Croft has achieved pop culture icon status and has her own action figure series, a coffee table anthology, comic book, clothing line, trading cards and a Tomb Raider movie from Paramount Pictures to debut in the year 2000.

"Lara Croft has clearly established herself as one of the most successful characters in the history of gaming. She's the perfect embodiment of a new millennium icon who continues to storm into the mainstream," said Paul Baldwin, vice president of marketing, Eidos Interactive. "Eidos is excited to work with the SCI FI Channel on this innovative campaign."

The spot will feature Lara in a special effects-driven scenario demonstrating her innate "sci-fi"-ness and the popular television channel's new direction. In her scene, Lara relaxes by playing video games. Her favorite? Surprisingly, it's not Tomb Raider but PONG.

Croft's spot joins eight others, each ending with the declaration and the campaign's signature tagline "I AM SCI FI."

The I AM SCI FI campaign is part of SCI FI's innovative new look designed to reinvigorate the brand.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online      -      Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Ponx For Atari Lynx To Be Released This Weekend At JagFest '99!

SONGBIRD PRODUCTIONS ANNOUNCES UPCOMING ATARI RELEASES

June 1, 1999

For immediate release:

ROCHESTER, MN -- Songbird Productions is pleased to announce renewed support for Atari gaming consoles in the form of new releases for the Jaguar and Lynx.

Topping off the list is Ponx for the Atari Lynx. Ponx brings the ball-and-paddle classic that started it all to the Lynx. But this isn't your ordinary game. Ponx features a number of options, such as multiple balls, a Lynx controlled opponent with selectable AI, and more. Plus, in a throwback to classic handheld gaming, play against a friend on the same Lynx unit (no comlynx cable or second Ponx cartridge necessary!).

The target release date for Ponx is June 18, 1999 at JagFest '99; and the retail price is \$39.95. If you are interested in ordering Ponx, please visit the Songbird Productions web page at <http://songbird.atari.org>. Dealer inquiries welcome.

To keep up to date with the latest news at Songbird Productions, be sure to visit the company web site at <http://songbird.atari.org>, or send an email to songbird@atari.org.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Judge May Allow Caldera Case

A federal judge signaled again Thursday that he likely will allow Caldera's David vs. Goliath lawsuit against Microsoft to go forward largely intact.

Microsoft attorneys had convinced U.S. District Judge Dee Benson to break the case into nine separate pieces, then tried to convince the judge to dismiss each claim piece by piece.

But on Thursday, both sides conceded that the judge was leaning toward denying Microsoft's requests for summary judgment, and allowing Caldera's attorneys to argue that the pieces of the case - while not indicative of illegal activity themselves - can be cobbled together to make the case against Microsoft.

Benson likened the bits to the O.J. Simpson murder trial, where prosecutors used an assortment of evidence - blood, physical evidence and expert testimony - to persuade jurors.

"That's all (Caldera's attorneys) want to do here," Benson said.

Caldera claims that Microsoft built in technical glitches to keep the Windows 3.1 software from working on the DR-DOS operating system Caldera purchased from Novell in 1996. Microsoft argues the company merely improved its Windows 3.0 software.

Caldera attorney Parker C. Folse III said that Windows 3.1 so revolutionized the computer world that the suggestion that the software might not work on DR-DOS devastated its sales.

An operating system controls the computer's basic functions, and is needed to execute program management software, such as Microsoft's Windows.

Essentially, Microsoft used its monopoly in the Windows program management software to strengthen a monopoly for its MS-DOS operating system, Caldera argued. Caldera is seeking damages which Microsoft attorney Jim Jardine has said would reach \$1.6 billion.

But Microsoft attorney Richard H. Klapper argued that Microsoft was under no obligation to make sure Windows 3.1 worked on any operating system other than its own. Nor, he argued, was Microsoft required to provide Caldera with an advanced copy of the program so Caldera could make sure it was compatible with DR-DOS.

Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson, a man once bewildered by a courtroom demonstration on downloading software, is proving a quick study on the technical jargon of the Microsoft trial - and a short fuse with some of the legal arguments.

Since the antitrust trial began in October, Jackson has flashed anger at lawyers and witnesses, laughed openly at videotape showing Microsoft chief Bill Gates ducking questions from the government and secretly arm-twisted both sides to negotiate a settlement.

He also has struggled to remain awake on occasion, appearing to doze during dull testimony in the warmth of the crowded courtroom after lunch.

Musing aloud, the federal judge wondered at one point whether Microsoft products were being priced low as cigarettes might be - to hook consumers and reap higher profits in the future.

When an economist testifying for Microsoft asserted "there isn't any evidence of that kind of addiction" with products such as Windows, Jackson answered, "Do you have kids?"

He will sometimes take over questioning a witness, forcing lawyers to wait quietly. He was obviously proud when it was clear he had grasped the concept of computer "intranets."

Despite his progress on the intimidating minutiae of the high-tech world, a clash of legal and computer cultures is apparent in the trial: He almost never hears testimony before 10 a.m. and ends the day before 5 p.m., in contrast to hours kept by technology workers - one e-mail from a top executive cited as evidence was time-stamped 3:01 a.m.

He is fond of sailing on weekends.

Even before his verdict, expected later this year, Jackson is making a mark on the industry he is judging.

His comments during the trial have been known to sway the stock market, such as when he described America Online's purchase of Netscape Corp. as possibly a "very significant change in the playing field."

When the trial resumes this week, Microsoft will question David Colburn, an AOL executive, about the \$10 billion purchase of rival Netscape. Netscape is the Internet software company presented as the most prominent victim of Microsoft's alleged aggression toward competitors.

Microsoft argues the deal illustrates competition is sufficiently robust in the high-tech industry that federal intervention is not required.

The government argues Microsoft's interest in AOL's purchase is a sideshow. But the judge at least suggested otherwise.

Jackson said his first impression was that the deal "could very well have some immediate effect" on issues argued at the trial.

"Everyone is thirsting for signals that the judge might think important," said Daniel Wall, a San Francisco antitrust lawyer. "This wasn't a signal - he shot up a flare so you couldn't miss it."

Microsoft Says AOL A Threat But Judge Skeptical

Microsoft Corp. sought to show at its trial Monday that it faces a competitive threat from America Online Inc. that makes antitrust allegations irrelevant, but the judge was skeptical about its line of questioning.

The Justice Department, satisfied that little damage had been done, decided against cross-examining Microsoft's witness and the trial will break until Wednesday, when the software giant's next rebuttal witness will be in Washington.

Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson told the lawyers at two bench conferences he was not sure where Microsoft lawyer John Warden was going with his questioning, according to several people at the bench conferences.

Microsoft called AOL executive David Colburn, who previously had been a witness for the government. Microsoft lawyers said in advance they would attack Colburn's credibility.

But Judge Jackson said Colburn knew little or nothing about many of the documents introduced into evidence and suggested that perhaps AOL Chairman Steve Case would have been a more appropriate witness, according to several people at the bench conferences.

Justice Department lawyer David Boies canceled plans to cross-examine Colburn, saying that there was nothing that he needed to add to Microsoft's examination.

"The only reason to cross-examine a witness is to clarify a point that needs clarifying," he told reporters. "I think that this witness was clear in his testimony -- and helpful."

The Justice Department and 19 states allege that Microsoft abused monopoly power in the market for the software operating systems that run most personal computers, and has focused on alleged unfair tactics used against Netscape Communications.

Microsoft gave away its Web browser, which competed with Netscape's flagship product, and later built its browser into its operating system. The government says Microsoft pressured computer makers not to feature Netscape's product.

Netscape sold out to AOL in November, 1998, soon after the trial started and after executives from each company had testified.

Microsoft has contended since then that the combination remade the competitive landscape and Colburn was supposed to help make that point.

AOL has a version of Microsoft's Internet Explorer in its proprietary software, used by more than 17 million AOL customers to browse the Web.

Microsoft's Warden presented documents in an effort to show that AOL considered dumping Microsoft's Internet Explorer in favor of Netscape, but decided to renew a contract due to public relations concerns.

Warden confronted AOL's Colburn with a Sept. 20, 1998, e-mail from AOL Chief Executive Officer Steve Case.

'My main point is we shouldn't assume we need or want to maintain (Internet Explorer) as primary browser," wrote Case. "Maybe that's the right answer, but maybe not -- we should push down on all possibilities before deciding."

As Warden started to question Colburn about the document, Boies stood and said the rules required Warden to show the witness the answer to the e-mail. The judge eventually ordered that.

The answer to Case came from Colburn's boss, AOL President Bob Pittman.

'I do think (Microsoft) is too strong to throw them out of the tent," wrote Pittman. 'They can hurt us if they think they have no other option. I think we need to stay in business with them, create a need for them to need us and then leave ourselves the flexibility to always accommodate them to a certain extent."

Silicon Valley Executive Defends Microsoft

A Silicon Valley executive gave a spirited defense of Microsoft Corp. at its antitrust trial Wednesday, calling the software giant a natural monopoly that should be allowed to expand for the benefit of consumers.

Eubanks, chief executive officer of Oblix Inc., is the second of three Microsoft rebuttal witnesses as the trial, now in its 72nd day, winds down.

Asked by a Microsoft lawyer if the firm's personal computer operating system was a 'natural monopoly," Eubanks replied: "Windows is an example of that."

Monopolies obtained by luck or skill are legal as long as they are not abused. The Justice Department and 19 states allege that Microsoft abused its monopoly position in personal computer operating systems to continue that monopoly and gain advantage in other business areas such as Internet browsers.

Eubanks, former Chief Executive Officer of Symantec Corp., quickly added that he was no lawyer. But he said that software writers 'tend to settle" on a 'platform," and for now Windows is that platform.

Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates was in Washington Wednesday with basketball star Shaquille O'Neal to promote a program encouraging children to safely surf the Internet.

'What Microsoft has done in terms of making Windows better for use on the Internet is a fantastic thing," Gates said at the event. 'I'm surprised we have to defend that at all. What we do is great, the competition is great. This is an industry that works very well."

At the trial, a new filing by the Justice Department showed Gates praising an internal memo, leaked to some reporters in December, as a useful public relations device.

The Justice Department introduced an e-mail in which Gates questioned a company spokesman on why he had restricted media distribution of his Dec. 1, 1998, memo to executive staff.

The memo provided an answer to the government's allegation that Microsoft gave away its Internet Explorer web browser to compete unfairly against Netscape Navigator.

'I am really surprised we restricted the distribution of this so much," Gates complained in an e-mail to Greg Shaw, a Microsoft public relations official.

'My comments are the best tool we have to shift the dialogue and get people to understand who gave consumers the fair price for browsing," Gates continued.

Shaw replied in another e-mail that the restricted distribution would provide more media interest than issuing a news release.

A Microsoft spokesman dismissed the memos as a ''sideshow."

Compaq Unveils Consumer PCs And Its Own Web Access

Compaq Computer Corp. Tuesday unveiled its latest line-up of consumer desktop and notebook computers with monitors, printers and new Internet services as the company stepped up sales beyond the PC boxes themselves.

The No. 1 PC maker at a news conference here demonstrated a set of new Internet services, including its own Compaq.net branded service starting at \$11.99 a month and NetZero, an ad-supported ''free" Web access service.

While Compaq has suffered slack corporate PC sales this year, leading to a sharp drop in its stock price and a top-level executive shakeout, consumer PCs remain a bright spot for the Houston company.

Compaq's new consumer PCs are part of the industry's new product introductions that take place each June, ahead of the family back-to-school purchasing season that takes place later this summer.

But unlike previous years, Compaq is focused less on promoting features inside the new machines than on the products and services built around each PC, an approach shared by major rivals International Business Machines Corp., Hewlett-Packard Co. and Dell Computer Corp.

'To be a long-term player, we probably need to be more than just a box player," Mike Larson, senior vice president and new general manager of Compaq's consumer unit, said in an interview.

The company showed off new Presario desktop PCs starting at \$599 running up to \$1,999, without monitors, for the fastest Intel chips on the market. New Presario notebook models begin at \$1,299 up to \$2,999 and beyond.

'The Internet is the No. 1 reason why consumers are buying computers today," Larson said of Compaq's plans to package PCs with a selection of Internet services. ''Customers are looking for one point of contact for the total package," he said.

The company introduced its new Compaq.net national Internet access service, which the company is wholesaling from Internet communications giant MCI WorldCom Inc. It replaces its existing Compaq Easy Internet Access

service, which it had offered through GTE Corp.

Compaq.net offers unlimited Web access for \$11.95 per month with a 12-month up-front payment, or \$9.95 for 10 hours per month and \$17.95 for unlimited service with a monthly payment plan. Customers receive their first 100 hours of service free.

Seeking to turn customers into repeat-buyers, Compaq offers a single point of contact via phone for all technical support questions on both PCs and Internet services, bridging a divide that exists when Web access comes from a different provider.

Besides its own service, Compaq continues to offer America Online Inc. Internet service and NetZero, a Web access service which offers free Internet access and e-mail in return for customers agreeing to view targeted ads online.

Larson declined to comment on whether Compaq had taken an equity stake in Westlake Village, Calif.-based NetZero, which is backed by venture capital firms Idealab Capital Partners and Draper Fisher Jurvetson and is allied with GTE.

Desktop color monitors are sold separately from PCs. A 15-inch model starts at \$299, a 17-inch model runs \$399 and a 19-inch screen costs \$599. Compaq also introduced a \$120 inkjet printer built by Lexmark International Group Inc.

Compaq is offering rebates of \$125 to \$175 when a customer buys a monitor and printer along with a PC.

With rebates, a complete \$599 system would sell for \$892, slightly lower than systems from other major PC brands, but well above what consumers can expect to pay for low-cost entry-level PCs some start-ups now offer for \$399 or less, before monitor and other equipment.

The new consumer PCs are designed to work with Compaq's home networking technology that allows families with multiple PCs to share Internet access within a home over one phone line and a single Internet access account. One desktop PC system on display offered movie-like surround sound with four stand-alone Klipsch speakers. The speakers cost \$250 and the total system would run about \$2,500.

At the news conference, Compaq also showcased "desktop replacement" notebooks with wide 15-inch screens and few if any sacrifices compared with a desktop PC.

A prototype of a new "road warrior" notebook on exhibit offered a light three-pound notebook detachable from a base holding both floppy disk and compact disk drives and multiple ports to plug in devices like printers or network connections.

The new products are available at build-to-order kiosks that allow buyers to assemble their own systems at major U.S. retailers or direct via telephone or via the Web at <http://www.compaq.com/buynow/online.html>

The year started with ``Happy 99" -- a computer bug disguised as a garish online greeting card, and it will end with Y2K. In between, it's shaping up as the year when hackers and virus writers became a lot more evil and effective.

``The (bug) programs are getting more sophisticated, more complex, with more functions -- and they are definitely coming more often," said Mark Zajicek, of Carnegie Mellon's Software Engineering Institute Computer Emergency Response Team.

The ExploreZip worm that hit this week was the third major outbreak, an e-mail-delivered program that hit thousands of computer users last Friday and Saturday and lost steam early this week.

The three major outbreaks have already caused damage estimated in the hundreds of millions of dollars this year, and computer experts are forecasting a high level of activity that might well crescendo at the start of the year 2000.

``Y2K is certainly going to be a big target," said Wes Wasson, director of anti-virus products at computer security giant Network Associates Inc. ``Virus writers are notorious for using 'trigger dates' in their payloads."

Companies have spent billions of dollars to keep their computer systems from failing as programs shift to the ``00" at the new year, requiring the rewriting of millions of lines of code. Virus writers are almost certain to ``exploit the confusion surrounding the Y2K problem," Wasson said.

The world of hackers and virus writers often mirrors what happens in the commercial software world. Malicious code writers copy each others' work, competing to create the most "features," often sharing technology over the Internet.

Hackers frequently work in groups, attacking, for example, military targets or government offices or corporate Web sites in organized waves.

While hackers specialize in breaking into systems and often have political or anti-authority agendas, virus writers are "impact players" trying to do as much damage as possible.

Increasingly the distinctions between the two camps are blurring, and widespread attacks are being combined with programs that do damage.

``They're not just digital graffiti writers anymore -- there are people out there doing real damage," said one corporate computer system manager.

``There are much more insidious problems lurking out there that haven't been seen yet," added Peter Neumann, chief scientist for Palo Alto, Calif.-based SRI International. ``A lot of serious problems exist that people have to face up to."

The year's first big computer invader, ``Happy 99," looked like the work of some precocious pre-teen who spends time downloading groovy graphics from the Internet, just to send them on to friends. The e-mail contained a graphic of an on-screen fireworks display, a glittery stream of colored light that could have made a nice screen saver.

But ``Happy 99," it turned out, carried more than a New Year's greeting. It launched a computer program that destroyed data and made public exposed users' confidential data -- and it signaled the start of a year in which

thousands of viruses would be unleashed over the Internet.

Happy 99 didn't spread far. But others did. The Melissa virus, appearing at the end of March, gained notoriety because it was the fastest-moving virus ever seen, hitting hundreds of thousands of computers around the world. The Chernobyl virus rendered a relatively small number of computers inoperable in this country, but hit many machines in Asia.

The creators of Chernobyl and Melissa signed their names to key pieces of software, which led to their apprehension by authorities. But ExploreZip's writer appears to have used the stealth style used by computer hackers who go to great lengths to hide their tracks.

'The hackers are just pointing out our vulnerabilities," said SRI's Neumann. 'This is a massive problem that shows the short-sightedness of the industry in dealing with security. The computer infrastructure is not being protected."

But Network Associates' Wasson said authorities are finally taking the threat more seriously.

'When we get a problem, the FBI is on the line fast now -- but that wasn't the case a year ago," he said.

Corporate users have been taking a proactive approach to fighting viruses as well, say those in the industry.

But a more negative reaction could begin to set in if more people are hit by an increasing number of system failures, said Mark Radcliffe, a partner in the Palo Alto, Calif., law firm of Gray Carey Ware & Freiderich.

Already, law firms are bracing for an explosion of Y2K lawsuits. Virus suits might soon follow.

'So far the anger is turned on virus writers and the hackers -- and there is a feeling of 'we're all in this together,'" said Radcliffe. 'But as things evolve the reaction could get nastier. People could become less patient and look for somebody else to blame. Then you'll see litigation."

New Computer Virus Could Linger

The latest outbreak of a computer virus began easing Tuesday as infected companies carefully reconnected e-mail and file-sharing links the bug used to spread.

Experts warned, however, that due to its crafty design, the Worm.Explore.Zip virus could remain a serious risk for weeks.

Five days after the epidemic took hold, anti-virus software companies reported the torrent of calls to customer-help lines was starting to ebb.

A government-chartered anti-virus team at Carnegie Mellon University reported that firsthand accounts of outbreaks were leveling off. But since the virus can lay dormant in an unused machine, the aftershocks could extend beyond the days it took to contain the Melissa and Chernobyl viruses this spring.

FBI Tracks Author of the Worm

The FBI is trying to track down the author of the Worm virus that left security managers on red alert at the end of last week.

The Worm.Explore.Zip virus created as much panic as the Melissa virus earlier this year when it spread like wildfire through companies' email systems.

Security experts were immediately concerned about the highly malicious nature of the Worm virus - which can strip Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint files from users' computers - claiming that it displays the trademarks of a highly sophisticated and motivated creator.

FCC Opposes Local Cable Internet Rules

U.S. regulators are considering a range of options to minimize the effect of a court decision two weeks ago allowing local authorities to regulate cable Internet services, a top official said Tuesday.

Federal Communications Commission Chairman William Kennard warned that the cable industry's high-speed Internet offerings could be delayed or even wrecked if thousands of local governments each impose a different set of regulations.

"The information superhighway will not work if there are 30,000 different technical standards or 30,000 different regulatory structures for broadband," Kennard said in a speech to the National Cable Television Association here. "We have to have a national policy."

A federal district court in Portland two weeks ago ruled that local cable franchising authorities had jurisdiction to require AT&T Corp. to allow competing Internet service providers onto its system. AT&T is planning to appeal.

Kennard said the FCC was considering its options, but declined to be specific. Among possible actions, the agency could ask the court to temporarily set aside its ruling during an appeal, enter the case on appeal on the side of the cable industry, or even possibly use some of its own broad authority to supersede local regulations.

"We can't overreact to one federal district court decision," Kennard told reporters after his speech. "We're very early on in this. There are a number of options that we can explore. At this point we need to allow the legal process to play out a little bit more."

Kennard's first approach appeared to be to try to convince local authorities not to act.

"We're going to work closely with our local franchising authorities," Kennard told reporters. "I don't want to give anybody the misimpression that we're not going to be dialoguing with them because some of them do have some serious concerns in this area."

Echoing a similar warning issued by AT&T chairman Michael Armstrong Monday, Kennard said regulation of cable Internet service by thousands of localities would create ``chaos."

In his speech, Kennard repeated what he has said many times since the FCC in February refrained from regulating cable Internet services while saying it would monitor the nascent market.

``We do not have a monopoly in broadband," Kennard said. "We have a 'no-opoly' because the fact is, most Americans don't even have broadband. We have to get these pipes built."

The FCC and Congress have so far declined to regulate cable Internet services, which require that consumers accessing the Internet over cable also use a cable-owned company to get Internet services like e-mail and Web page hosting.

About 750,000 people currently use cable modems to reach the Internet at speeds 50 times or more faster than the tens of millions more who still log on over ordinary telephone modems.

Some local cable franchising authorities, heeding warnings from Internet service providers and consumer groups that exclusive Internet service deals were anti-competitive, have tried to require cable companies to allow competing providers onto their systems.

The Portland court ruling has pulled down some cable stocks, especially that of AtHome Corp., the leading cable-owned Internet service provider.

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